



**TESTIMONY of the CT ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
Before the Planning and Development Committee**

IN OPPOSITION TO:

Legislation Requiring the Installation of Seat Belts on all New School Buses

The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) is opposed to legislation that would require the installation of seat belts on all new school buses. The organization's opposition is based on the fact that this action should not be required until the following questions are answered.

- **Most important, will the use of seat belts actually establish a safer situation for children?** This is a matter regarding which there is divided opinion with some thought given to the proposition that seat belts on school buses do little if anything to add to safety and can, in some cases, make the children less safe.

In addition:

- Will bus monitors be needed to make sure that all students use the seat belts?
- Will bus monitors be needed to assist students disengage seat belts if an emergency evacuation is required.
- Will having some buses with seat belts and others without belts put districts in a difficult to defend position if students on a bus without belts are injured in an accident?
- Will school districts be held liable if an injury occurs and some or all injured students were not using seat belts at the time of the accident?
- Will the State pay for this additional mandate?
- What will be the cost of maintaining seat belts?
 - Will the installation of seat belts make it impossible to seat three children per seat and thus lead to the need for more school buses? Who will pay for any additional school buses thus required?
 - What will be the impact of this mandate on existing contract between school boards and transportation providers?

CAPSS therefore requests that a legislative mandate to install seat belts on all new school buses be postponed until answers can be given to these d questions.